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SUBJECT: YUGOSLAV REACTION TO ABM DECISION

064228
DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/IR
REVIEWED BY *Michael J. Jones* DATE *7/15/80*
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE _____
TS AUTH. _____ REASON(S) _____
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED ☒ RELEASABLE ☒
RELEASE DENIED ☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS _____

1. YUGOSLAV CENTRAL PRESS HAS GIVEN MAJOR ATTENTION TO PRESIDENT'S DECISION REPORTING IT FACTUALLY AND CARRYING STORIES FROM ITS CORRESPONDENTS IN US ON AMERICAN EDITORIAL AND CONGRESSIONAL REACTION. FIRST EDITORIAL COMMENT IN MAR. 18 BORBA, SUMS UP MOST NEGATIVE COMMENTS WHICH APPEARED IN US PRESS ON ORIGINAL SENTINEL SYSTEM AND JOHNSON ADMINISTRATION RATIONALE FOR PROCEEDING WITH IT. IN DISCUSSING NEW SYSTEM BORBA FACTUALLY LISTS ADVANTAGES OF NEW OVER OLD AS STAT. DI IN PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT, EMPHASIZING THAT SYSTEM CAN BE EASILY MODIFIED AS NATURE OF THREAT CHANGES. EDITORIAL CONCLUDES THAT ABM SYSTEMS STILL OF DOUBIOUS VALUE SINCE THEIR COST EFFICIENCY IS QUESTIONABLE AND THEY BECOME INTEGRAL PART OF GREAT POWER COMPETITION. AN AGREEMENT TO CEASE ABM DEPLOYMENT, IT SAYS, EITHER ON BASIS OF QUID PRO QUO OR AS PART OF SOME CONDOMINIUM ARRANGEMENT SUCH AS EVEN ALLIES OF SUPER-POWERS FEAR, WOULD NOT IMPROVE MATTERS FOR ANYONE ON EARTH; REAL IMPROVEMENT WOULD REQUIRE THAT ANY AGREEMENT ON FREEZING OR CANCELLING DEPLOYMENT OF SYSTEM BE BASED ON MUCH WIDER INTERESTS THAN ARE MOMENTARILY PRESENT IN POLICY OF SUPER POWERS. MAR. 17 TANJUG DESPATCH FROM PEIPING REPORTS LOCAL CHINESE PRESS AS ASSERTING US INTENTION TO BUILD COSTLY ABM SYSTEM AS FURTHER INDICATION OF US-USSR COLLUSION AND OF THEIR JOINT EFFORTS TO BLACKMAIL CHINA.

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2. PAUCITY OF EDITORIAL COMMENT MAY BE DUE IN PART TO YUGO PRESS PREOCCUPATION WITH NINTH PARTY CONGRESS AND ITS AFTERMATH.

DECON: 3/19/70. ELBRICK:

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